ORIGIN/ACTION

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NEA 7	CU	INR 5
E	S/P 1	IO 5
L	FBO	AID
S/S 1	O/FSI 1	
AGR	COM 10	FRB
INT	LAB 6	TAR
TR	XMB	AIR 5
ARMY 3	CIA 20	NAVY 5
OSD 33	USIA 10	NSA 3

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LAB 3-2 GER W
HANDLING INDICATOR

TO : Department of State

INFO : ATHENS, PARIS and BRUSSELS

DEPARTMENT OF STATE AUTOMATIC TELEGRAM
DATE 8 MAY 1967

FROM : Amembassy BONN

DATE: May 8, 1967

SUBJECT: West German Trade Union Opposition to the Military Regime in Greece

REF :

The West German trade union movement has reacted strongly to the military takeover in Greece. The German Trade Union Federation (DGB) has publicly expressed its dismay about the coup d'etat. The DGB has demanded the immediate restoration of democratic rights, the release of arrested political leaders, and has expressed its solidarity with Greek workers, especially DGB members among the Greek laborers in the FRG. Speeches by union officials at May Day rallies reflected this attitude.

DGB Board member Guenter Stephan declared in a press interview April 29, that a "feudal" clique makes a great civilized nation look like "a Central-American Banana Republic". Stephan charged that conditions "similar to civil war and plain terror in Greece" are now alarming the entire international free labor movement". "We in the Federal Republic with 160,000 Greek workers can see how a right-wing extremist terror organization directed by Athens has extended its activities to German soil. Democratic Greeks are receiving murder threats".

Stephan emphasized that Greeks who are members of a DGB union can rely on the DGB's full support. "We will not permit Greek authorities to organize the forced repatriation of countrymen whom they deem suspicious. Under the pretext of apprehending Communists and criminals, the military regime in Athens hopes to get hold of democrats. The DGB is committed to offer resistance, and will do so...".

As a further sign of protest, Stephan and Heinz Richter, an official in DGB headquarters, returned the Greek Government awards they received a year ago for their efforts on behalf of Greek workers in the FRG.

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Drafted by: POL:LAB:DKux/HSchrinner

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Clearances:
POL JVinhof/JSSutterlin

GER- Crowley noted 5/19/65 File

Stephan had been conferred the "Commander of the Royal Phoenix Order" and Richter the "Golden Cross of the Royal Phoenix Order".

COMMENT: It is unknown how many of the approximately 160,000 Greek "guest workers" are members of DGB unions. The Metalworkers Union (I.G. Metall) has been particularly active in organizing Greek workers. While the Karamanlis Government sought to discourage Greeks from joining German unions, the Papandreou Government, which was interested in close cooperation with the DGB, encouraged Greek workers to join DGB unions. After Papandreou's overthrow, the relations between German unions and Greek authorities became much cooler.

MCGHEE